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Title: Senate Braces For Trump's Second Impeachment Trial; CDC Says Schools Can Safely Reopen, White House Says They're Not Ready; CNN Goes Inside Gathering of QAnon Followers; Answering Viewers' Legal Questions In CNN's "Cross Exam"; Countdown To Super Bowl LV. Aired 3- 4p ET

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Headline: Senate Braces For Trump's Second Impeachment Trial; CDC Says Schools Can Safely Reopen, White House Says They're Not Ready; CNN Goes Inside Gathering of QAnon Followers; Answering Viewers' Legal Questions In CNN's "Cross Exam"; Countdown To Super Bowl LV. Aired 3- 4p ET

Guests: William Cohen, Celine Gounder

Highlight: Democrats signal they're unlikely to subpoena Trump to testify. The House voted to remove Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene from her committees, in part, due to her endorsement of QAnon, and CNN gets an inside look at QAnon, the believers, and what they say behind closed doors. Countdown is ongoing to Super Bowl LV on Sunday, and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers against the Kansas City Chiefs, but now, there's news that Chiefs assistant coach, Britt Reid, will miss the game after a serious car accident.

[15:00:06]

COY WIRE, CNN SPORTS CORRESPONDENT: How much more satisfying is this success after knowing all it took for you to get in?

SHAQUIL BARRETT, TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS LINEBACKER: Oh, it's so much more satisfying. And just to me, even to see like where I was four years ago, five years ago to where I'm at now, I am just like blessed, like I'm blessed, like that's what it is because it just so happened to work out perfectly for me, ended up in a nice situation. And the timing was perfect and everything just worked out like divinely.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

WIRE: It's going to be a great game, Andy, indeed.

ANDY SCHOLLES, CNN SPORTS ANCHOR: Yes, Coy. I hope we'll be getting an epic shootout, everyone. Enjoy the game.

ANA CABRERA, CNN HOST: Hello on this Saturday, you are live in the CNN NEWSROOM. I'm Ana Cabrera in New York. Thanks for being with me.

Exactly one month ago today, it was that terrifying and disgraceful day when the very heart of America was attacked from within, U.S. citizens filled with rage and waving Trump flags, smashed their way into the United States Capitol. It left five people dead, a nation in disbelief and the president being impeached on a charge he personally incited it all.

Ahead of the Senate trial next week, one of the ten House Republicans who voted to impeach President Trump is becoming the latest to navigate the consequences of going against the most powerful figure in the party. The Wyoming Republican Party is now considering a motion to formally censure the number three Republican in the House, Liz Cheney.

And while President Biden is sidestepping questions about whether he would vote to impeach if he were still in the Senate, or he would vote to convict, he was clear on something else when it came to his predecessor, that he doesn't think he should get classified intelligence briefings.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP) NORAH O'DONNELL, CBS NEWS HOST: Should former President Trump still receive intelligence briefings.

JOE BIDEN, U.S. PRESIDENT: I think not.

O'DONNELL: Why not?

BIDEN: because of his erratic behavior, unrelated to the insurrection.

O'DONNELL: I mean, you've called him an extensional threat, you've called him dangerous, you've called him reckless.



BIDEN: Yes, I have, and I believe it.

O'DONNELL: What's your worst fear if he continues to get these intelligence briefings?

BIDEN: I'd rather not speculate out loud. I just think that there is no need for him to have the intelligence briefing. What value is giving in intelligence briefing? What impact does he have at all other than the fact he might slip and say something?

(END VIDEO CLIP)

CABRERA: Let's get to our White House Correspondent Arlette Saenz standing by for us. We cannot overstate how extraordinary it is that a current president feels his predecessor is too erratic to get intelligence briefings.

ARLETTE SAENZ, CNN WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT: Yes, Ana. It is not often that you hear a current president expressing concern or really criticizing their immediate predecessor, but that is exactly what you are hearing from President Biden there, as he is airing his own concerns about former President Trump potentially having access to classified intelligence briefings.

Now, White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki released a statement this afternoon saying what the president was doing was expressing his concern about former President Trump, that he ultimately trusts and values what his intelligence community will decide on this issue, essentially suggesting that it will be up to the intelligence community whether to provide these types of briefings to the former president if he requests them.

Now, so far, our reporting has indicated that the former president has not requested one of those intelligence briefings, but it is something that is afforded to former presidents, and we've heard of past presidents taking advantage of that. So we will see whether that is something that the intelligence community has to assess going forward when it comes to former President Trump.

Now, next week, the Senate is about to begin that impeachment trial into President Trump. And President Biden is trying to avoid answering directly whether he himself would vote to convict Trump if that vote were up to him if he were a senator. Take a listen what he had to tell CBS News yesterday. (BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

O'DONNELL: Let's turn to the impeachment trial, President Trump's impeachment trial. If you were still a senator, would you vote to convict him?

BIDEN: Look, I ran like hell to defeat him because I thought he was unfit to be president. I watched what everybody else watched, what happened when that crew invaded the United States Congress. But I'm not in the Senate now. I'll let the Senate make that decision.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

SAENZ: And that just follows a strategy of how President Biden has been approaching this.

[15:05:01]

But he has said, he believes, that Senate impeachment trial does need to happen. Ana?

CABRERA: Arlette Saenz in Wilmington, Delaware, thank you.

So now, with just three days to go until Trump's second impeachment trial, House Democrats are signaling they don't need the former president's testimony in order to effectively make their case.

CNN's Suzanne Malveaux is on Capitol Hill. And, Suzanne, what do we know about how Democrats are approaching this trial set to start on Tuesday?

SUZANNE MALVEAUX, CNN NATIONAL CORRESPONDENT: A number of things we know and some things we don't know, Ana. But I will say that it was Tuesday, that is when it will begin in earnest, all 100 senators will take an oath of impartiality and also summons will be brought before the Trump legal team to answer to that single article of impeachment.

Then we know that the House managers will present their case led by Representative Jamie Raskin, making the case, a single article of impeachment of incitement of insurrection, then essentially laying out the case that the president's previous statements, his tweets and finally the rally that he held January 6th, wild up, whipped up this crowd and incited them to go to the Capitol to disrupt the certification of the election results and led to this

violence.

We know that Raskin did send a letter to the president and his legal team inviting him, requesting that he come to the Capitol testify and also be held to cross-examination. That was quickly dismissed by the legal team. They called it a political stunt.

Now, what they will argue not at all anything about election fraud or the lies about the stolen election but they will argue that it's an illegitimate process, that it's unconstitutional because the president is no longer in office. So what is the point of removing him? That is going to be the main case. They're also going to make the case that it's a matter of freedom of speech, that whatever the president was saying really wasn't in direct correlation to what happened here, the horror that happened here at the Capitol.

Now, Ana, some things are still being decided, worked out. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, as well as Mitch McConnell, behind the scenes, trying to determine the scope, the scale of the process of the trial, Democrats and Republicans alike.

If you talk to many of them, they don't want a lengthy trial. Democrats want to move on and try to help the Biden administration with the COVID relief passage in passing that. And a lot of Republicans, quite frankly, want to get as far as away as possible with Trump and his association with the horrors that happened on January 6th. Ana?

CABRERA: And yet, we still see more and more fallout after that day. The state Republican Party now in Wyoming is considering a motion to formally censure Congresswoman Liz Cheney because of her vote to impeach. What more can you tell us about this?

MALVEAUX: We have been monitoring that all day. And, essentially, there was a statement that came out initially in the morning that she was not going to be able attend. They asked her to attend but she said she was not going to be able to do that.

She has been unapologetic about that vote impeaching the former president and it is very likely that the group, that this state, Wyoming group of Republicans will, in fact, censure her, will punish her because of her actions. From what we have seen, they have been deliberating back and forth throughout the afternoon. But she would actually join a group of Republicans who have all faced punishment and some criticism for going against the former president, Ana.

CABRERA: Okay. Suzanne Malveaux, we know you're going to stay on top of that. Thank you.

My next guest was a member of the House Judiciary Committee in 1974, when he became one of the first Republicans to break with his party and vote for the impeachment of Richard Nixon and later served as secretary of defense in the Clinton administration. Secretary William Cohen, thank you so much for being with us.

WILLIAM COHEN, DEFENSE SECRETARY UNDER PRESIDENT CLINTON: Good to be with you, thank you.

CABRERA: You heard President Biden punt on how he would vote if he were still in the Senate. But as someone who had to make that decision yourself, I guess what would advice would you give the senators who next week will be jurors in Trump's impeachment trial?

COHEN: I would ask the senators to live up to their oath, the oath they took of office to defend this country, to defend our Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic. We saw the domestic enemies. All you have to do is roll the tapes. You don't need to have a former president testify. We saw what he did, what he said and what followed from that.

So I don't think you have to have a testimony of one who has persistently and consistently lied over the years. I think roll the tape and then ask the members of the Senate, to say, is this conduct, which is performed or carried out by the president and his supporters, is this something that is worthy of impeaching, of convicting, of inciting a riot in an attempt to overturn the government of the United States? If this doesn't amount to a conviction of impeachment, nothing will.

So, I would say, listen to what the evidence says, watch it. You're going to rely upon me or your lying eyes type of approach and then cast a judgment that says this is conduct inconsistent with the oath of office that you have taken and inconsistent with the president's oath of office.

[15:10:01]

And he should be condemned for it.

And the reason you go forward with the impeachment you need to remind the American people just how serious this was, just how serious an attack it was

against our democracy. Don't let that fade away because it was three or four weeks ago, remind the American people through that televised coverage of the impeachment process so that everybody will understand what was at stake and what is at stake now. The question, is it constitutional, the weight of the scholars is on the side of, yes, it's constitutional.

CABRERA: And you obviously have a perspective from wearing different hats in which you had to protect and defend the democracy of the U.S. from being a Congress member to being secretary of defense. You heard President Biden say he doesn't think Trump should still get intelligence briefings due to his erratic behavior.

The former principal deputy director of national intelligence under Trump, Sue Gordon, recently wrote an op-ed, in which she said this, and I quote. It is not clear that he understands the tradecraft to which he has been exposed. The reasons, the knowledge he has acquired must be protected from disclosure or the intentions and capabilities of adversaries and competitors who will use any means to advance their interests at the expense of ours.

Secretary Cohen, did you ever think you would hear that about someone who sat in the Oval Office?

COHEN: No. I never thought I would see what I had to see for the past four years. President Biden is absolutely correct. The former president should not have access to classified information. Number one, it's extended to former presidents as a matter of courtesy.

There's no requirement that any former president have access to this. Secondly, the former president will never be an emissary for the Biden administration under any circumstances. So, as President Biden has said, there's no need. And we have to remember the intelligence community went to President Trump, say his name here, and said, please, do not extend the intelligence briefings to your daughter and son-in-law. They are conflicted, they are in business. President Trump waived that. We now have the same situation for himself. He's back in business. And there could be no greater conflict of interest than we've seen there.

And remember, President Trump is very good at keeping some secrets, his college transcripts, his taxes, his conversations with Putin. What he's not very good at is protecting our national security when he had the foreign minister from Russia and the Russian ambassador into the office after firing the FBI director and revealed classified information.

So, no, there should be no reason at all that he should ever be given access to classified information because he may run again, because he may be in business, may be in another television network. There's absolutely no reason and justifiable reason to have him have access to intelligence, which he denigrated for four years, in which he accepted President Putin for four years, which he accepted Kim Jong-un of North Korea for four years. No. So, I would say no reason, I think, for every reason to say he shouldn't.

CABRERA: I want to talk further into your experience as a former secretary of defense, because we now know that some of those arrested in the Capitol riot were current or former military. CNN has new reporting that military commanders are looking at possible ways to deal with extremism in their ranks, whether it's more education or possibly increasing scrutiny of social media posts. What do you think is the best course of action?

COHEN: I think all of the above. I think we have to be much more scrutinizing as we look to draw people into the military. After all, they come from our society and they carry with them both their enlightenment or bigotry, their backgrounds, all of the boundaries that have been inculcated to them over the years from their parents. So we take from society and some of them come with that kind of bigotry that is almost inherent with them at this point.

So what the military does better than anybody is try to break down those sentiments that you've accumulated over the years to say it's really unit cohesion, it's readiness, it's being able to fight effectively together. And if you start espousing white supremacist views, obviously, that's going to contribute to undermining readiness, undermining unit cohesion and jeopardizing national security.

So we have to be more scrutinizing of people coming in. We have to have greater oversight in terms of what they are saying and doing, consistent protecting whatever right they have to say things but not right to do things that would undermine the effectiveness and readiness of our military. Those things have to be done and I'm sure they will under Secretary Austin. I'm looking forward to seeing him in the future and having a chance to meet with him.

CABRERA: Well, former Defense Secretary William Cohen, do you think you will meet with him? Has he reached out to you by chance? [15:15:00]

COHEN: Yes, I do. I've had a chance to meet with other secretaries of defense and look forward to meeting Secretary Austin, yes.

CABRERA: Former Defense Secretary William Cohen, again, thank you for being with us and sharing your expertise and insights.

COHEN: My pleasure. Thanks for having me.

CABRERA: These pictures are from just moments ago at a memorial at the Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens, Florida, to honor FBI Agent Laura Schwitzenberger. She and other FBI special agents, including Daniel Alfin were killed in a shootout in Sunrise, Florida, as they were carrying out a federal search warrant down at an apartment complex.

Schwitzenberger joined the FBI in 2005. When she was 43 years old and survived by her husband and two children.

We'll be right back.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

CABRERA: There is a fierce debate right now over how to send students and teachers back into the classroom safely.

[15:20:00]

The CDC expects to release guidance on school re-openings in the coming week but there has been confusing messaging.

First, I want you to listen to CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DR. ROCHELLE WALENSKY, CDC DIRECTOR: I also want to be clear that there is increasing data to suggest schools can safely reopen and that that safe reopening does not suggest that teachers need to be vaccinated in order to reopen safely.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

CABRERA: But White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki appeared to walk that back.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JEN PSAKI, WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY: Dr. Walensky spoke to this in her personal capacity. Obviously, she's the head of the CDC. But we're going to wait for the final guidance to come out so we can use that as a guide for schools around the country.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

CABRERA: With us now, Infectious Disease Specialist and Epidemiologist Dr. Celine Gounder, who also served on the Biden-Harris Transition COVID Advisory Board.

Dr. Gounder, we are almost a year into this pandemic now, and even as the Biden administration says they want to follow the science and they keep putting the scientists and the health experts in front of us, they are giving mixed messages. Doesn't the public deserve clarity on what's best for children and teachers?

DR. CELINE GOUNDER, FORMER MEMBER, BIDEN-HARRIS TRANSITION COVID ADVISORY BOARD: I have got to say, I agree with Dr. Walensky. Having seen the data, the data shows that children really do not spread significantly in the school setting. In fact, they are far less likely to be contributing to transmission of coronavirus if they're in school than if they're out of school.

In school, if their schools are supported with the appropriate personal protective equipment, assistance to distance students properly, provide the appropriate ventilation. Students and school are also being monitored and observed and people are making sure that they are hearing the public health guidance. So they can be very safe, much safer for students to be in school than out of the community, perhaps not under the monitoring of parents, out socializing and transmitting with their friends outside of school.

CABRERA: But what about teachers, if they're worried?

I completely appreciate that concern. My own little sister, who I think has been on your show, is a high school principal. And they have had cases in her school, although I would note those cases have been among the adults, adults who have not themselves been following the social distancing and masking requirements or guidance.

And so I think this is a situation where we're really solving for the wrong problem here. Students are much safer in the classroom, they're much less likely to be transmitting to the educators in the classroom and it's really incumbent (ph) on us to make sure that adults and students have the resources they need to be kept safe.

CABRERA (voice over): Okay. I just want to now get to some news we just got in. This is an update from the CDC. More than 39 million COVID-19 vaccine doses have been administered now in the U.S. We've also learned the number of vaccine doses administered here in the United States have outnumbered the number of new COVID-19 case ten to one, so that is obviously good news. Does this mean the U.S. is getting a handle on the pandemic?

GOUNDER: We're seeing a decrease in the number of cases, hospitalizations and deaths because we've essentially had the peak from the transmission that occurred over the holidays. We had a lot of transmission occurring as people were getting together with families and friends. They were not social distancing all the time. Many were not wearing masks and they were doing this indoors. And so a lot of transmission resulted from the holidays.

Now, people are back to work or more sticking to their own households, and so we're not seeing the same level of transmission. That said, I do have concern that this upcoming Super Bowl Sunday could lead to more transmission, just like we saw over the holidays, and not to mention spring break holidays coming up in the spring.

CABRERA: And Valentine's Day is around the corner, so we'll have to be on guard. I've been asking our viewers what questions they have and here is one of them. Should you get the coronavirus vaccine if you are currently sick with COVID-19 symptoms?

GOUNDER: We do not recommend that you get vaccinated while sick, but once you have recovered from your illness, whether that's COVID or the flu, or whatever it happens to be, once you've recovered, we do recommend that if it is your turn to get vaccinated, that you get vaccinated as soon as possible.

CABRERA: And quickly, if you will. If you've had COVID-19, are you -- is there immunity to some of the new variants that are out there?

GOUNDER: We're really concerned that there is not. The natural infection does not seem to provide durable and robust protection regardless of the strain, but in particular against these variant strains. So this is really a very good example of why it's important to get vaccinated that very often vaccine-induced immunity is far more reliable than is the immunity you get from a natural infection.

CABRERA: Great information. Thank you, Dr. Celine Gounder, great to have you with us.

Ever wonder who is part of QAnon and what they say and do behind closed doors?

[15:25:04]

Well, CNN got behind those doors and into one of their meetings. See for yourself, next.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

CABRERA: Welcome back. Come take a look at this stunning video out of St. Louis where inmates at a jail downtown busted out the windows and then you can see them setting things on fire. Officials say a faulty locking system allowed some of the inmates to jimmy out of their selves at which point, they then released other inmates in all about 115 detainees managed to overtake a part of the building's fourth floor.

[15:30:01]

And at some point, a corrections officer was attacked. Had to be transported to a local hospital.

Officials say there was never danger of the inmates actually escaping the building.

This week, the House voted to remove Republican Congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Greene from her committee assignments, in part, because of her embrace of the dangerous and debunked QAnon conspiracy theory.

Who are QAnon believers and what do they say behind closed doors?

CNN's **Donie** O'Sullivan brings us an exclusive look.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: There's not supposed to be media coverage. There will be media blackout.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: One little piece of advice for the mainstream media is not everything can be debunked.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: The media is ether going to get on the right side of history or they're going to go down with the ship.

DONIE O'SULLIVAN, CNN REPORTER (voice-over): You might think wearing a face mask would help a reporter go unnoticed but not at this gathering of QAnon followers in Arizona just two weeks before November's election.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Take off those damned masks and leave them off.

(APPLAUSE)

O'SULLIVAN: That's me and my colleague there, two of the very few people wearing masks at this indoor event in the middle of a pandemic.

And the guy at the back of the room? He's known as the QAnon shaman. And he would go on to storm the capitol in January.

(SINGING)

O'SULLIVAN: "Where we go one, we go all," an infamous QAnon slogan promoted by Trump's first national security adviser, Michael **Flynn**.

MICHAEL FLYNN, FORMER NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER: Where we go one, we go all.

O'SULLIVAN: And played as an anthem at this meeting of Trump supporters.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: We are at war right now. And we in this room understand that very, very much.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Obviously, we heard the president talking about stuff, haven't you?

CROWD: Yes.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: That QAnon thing.

CROWD: Yes.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Did he disavow anybody?

CROWD: No.

O'SULLIVAN: Two nights earlier, Trump had praised QAnon followers at a town hall with Savannah Guthrie.

SAVANNAH GUTHRIE, CO-HOST, NBC NEWS: Can you, once and for all, state that that is completely not true --

(CROSSTALK)

GUTHRIE: -- and disavow QAnon in its entirety?

DONALD TRUMP, FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: I know nothing about QAnon.

GUTHRIE: I just told you.

TRUMP: I know very little.

You told me. But what you told me doesn't necessarily make it fact. I have to say that.

(CHEERING)

O'SULLIVAN: The message to the people in this room was clear: Trump was on their side.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: So, we have 17 days between now and a massive Trump victory.

(APPLAUSE)

O'SULLIVAN: In the room, prominent figures in the QAnon movement, including Jim Watkins, who runs the 8chan site, 8kun, where QAnon messages are posted. And at least two people who would go on to Washington, D.C. on January 6th.

JACOB CHANSLEY, QANON SHAMAN: In that time, all it takes is keeping our eyes and our ears open to see who is on what side.

O'SULLIVAN: Jacob Chansley, the so-called QAnon shaman, who is charged for his role in the insurrection and went on a hunger strike in prison because they didn't have organic food.

ALAN HOSTETTER, AMERICAN PHOENIX PROJECT & QANON SUPPORTER: We are at war right now.

O'SULLIVAN: And this man, Alan Hostetter, known for organizing anti- lockdown protests in California.

HOSTETTER: Nobody wants violence. So, we are conditioned from the time we are children in this country to always think that violence is a horrible, horrible thing.

Until we go back and reflect on our Revolutionary War. They picked up guns at some point and said enough.

Until we reflect on the Civil War. We ended slavery by picking up guns and dealing with that.

We don't want that to have to happen. But it has to be something in the back of your mind.

O'SULLIVAN: Hostetter's home was raided by the FBI after the insurrection.

Media was not allowed to officially attend the event but any member of the public could attend. And I signed up using my name and work e-mail address.

Also, in attendance was Travis View, host of the "QAnon Anonymous" podcast, who has been tracking this conspiracy theory for years.

TRAVIS VIEW, HOST, "QANON ANONYMOUS" PODCAST: One of my big takeaways for attending the "Q" conference is that the QAnon movement is so much more than just the predictions or the feeling like you're getting inside information.

It's about the community. The people there felt they were part of something big and revolutionary and that they were opposing absolute evil.

And that made me feel like this is something that's not going to go away just because Trump lost an election.

CROWD: Where we go one, we go all.

(APPLAUSE)

(END VIDEOTAPE)

CABRERA: Donie O'Sullivan is joining us now.

Donie, what an experience sitting in that meeting. This group obviously still has traction even though Trump is gone.

What's next for them?

O'SULLIVAN: Yes, look, this ideology, this set of beliefs, this conspiracy theory continues to live on.

Some believers in this still believe Trump, in some way, is going to come back as not in four years but as president some time in the next few weeks. The crazy conspiracy still lives on.

And also, of course, when you see people like Marjorie Taylor Greene and some senior Republicans, who are failing to outright condemn her set of beliefs in QAnon, it sends the message to many of these believers that they should continue following this conspiracy theory.

[15:35:08]

CABRERA: When President Trump refused to make it very clear that he didn't believe in it, they took it as him supporting it.

You also spoke to a former QAnon believer how she reacted when none of the group's predictions came true on Inauguration Day.

Let's take a listen.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ASHLEY VANDERBILT, FORMER QANON BELIEVER: I had to call my mom and I told her, we're all going to die. We're going to be owned by China. I was like, I might have to pull my daughter out of school because they might take her. I was scared to death.

O'SULLIVAN: Right before the inauguration, you didn't believe Biden was really going to get sworn in?

VANDERBILT: No, I expected a blackout. I expected the TV to go black and nothing to work. So we wouldn't see anything.

The assumption of what would happen would be that most of the Democratic leaders there, quite a few of the Republican leaders, all the Hollywood elite that had attended, they'd all be arrested, the military will haul them off.

They said that Trump opened back up Guantanamo Bay. And then the military would run country, put us in martial law because the law was too unhinged and may be a danger to us.

And then, Trump would come back when the government was rebuilt. I know it sounds crazy.

O'SULLIVAN: You believed this?

VANDERBILT: I did.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

CABRERA: Was that the aha moment for her, the moment that ultimately helped her break away from the group when the inauguration came and went, all of which she just mentioned didn't happen?

O'SULLIVAN: Yes, so in QAnon, there is "Q," the person or people who post these messages. They are supposed to be seen as sort of all- seeing god-like figure.

And there's a plan. And for year, in this supposed plan, Trump was going to round up and arrest the so-called Deep State.

And when that didn't happen and then Inauguration Day happened and Biden was sworn in as president, the QAnon believers quickly tried to come up with a new conspiracy theory, which was saying, no, this is all still going to plan, Trump will come back somehow.

But obviously, you saw Ashley Vanderbilt there. She said, wait a minute, this is just too far. She realized she had been duped.

And what's incredible, Ana, is that, that's a 27-year-old mom there down in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. She is a former QAnon believer.

She speaks like she's a former believer. She's called this out for what it is, a ridiculous, dangerous conspiracy theory.

You listen to somebody like Marjorie Taylor Greene, she does not sound like a former QAnon believer.

CABRERA: No, you're absolutely right.

I also find it interesting, when you look at some of the data out there, that doesn't necessarily mean if you have high education that you're not a QAnon believer. It's unclear exactly what makes somebody more susceptible to this theory, this conspiracy theory.

Donie O'Sullivan, your reporting is always fascinating. Thank you for being with us.

O'SULLIVAN: Thank you, Ana.

CABRERA: This week is impeachment trial, round two, for former President Donald Trump. What we're learning about his legal defense. "CROSS EXAM" with Elie Honig is next.

You're live in the CNN NEWSROOM.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

[15:43:08]

CABRERA: Three days from now, the unprecedented second impeachment trial of former President Donald Trump begins.

And I know you have a lot of legal questions ahead of next week's trial. So let's get right to CNN legal analyst and former federal and state prosecutor, Elie Honig, for our weekly "CROSS EXAM" segment where Elie answers your questions.

So let's jump into it. The first question from our viewer is this: Do the House impeachment managers have the legal power to force Donald Trump to testify at his home impeachment trial?

ELIE HONIG, CNN LEGAL ANALYST: Ana, this is going to be a fascinating legal and strategic decision.

So on the one hand, it's unlikely that we actually see Donald Trump testify at this trial. But it's also, in effect, to some extent, how aggressive Democrats are willing to be.

Last week, House impeachment managers sent a letter to Donald Trump inviting him to testify. Essentially, they said you made some pretty bold claims in your defense here. Why don't you come down to the Senate and back them up?

Trump's team, very quickly said no thank you. I think that was a wise decision.

What happens now? The House impeachment managers can try to subpoena Donald Trump. But that depends on the Senate. The Senate, as we know, is in Democratic control right now. But it's not entirely clear that the Democratic majority is in for this.

We've heard certain Democratic Senators say, if he testifies, it will be a circus. We don't want a circus.

But if they did issue a subpoena, they would leave Donald Trump with three options. All of them bad.

One, he could testify. Very risky.

Two, he could fight the subpoena in courts. Thanks going to delay. I think he would lose.

Or, third, he could take the Fifth Amendment. He has the right but Donald Trump himself has said only guilty people take the Fifth, that's just for the mob.

So, Ana, bottom line, if Democrats are willing to fight here, and it's not clear they are, but if they are, they could put Donald Trump in a really tricky position.

CABRERA: I will be asking Senate Democratic Senator coming up in one of our later hours that question if that's what the fight.

HONIG: Yes.

CABRERA: Let me move on to another viewer asking about Trump's defense that it's unconstitutional to try a former official? What does the law say about this argument?

[15:45:08]

HONIG: We don't know exactly for sure. It's not specified in the Constitution. We don't have an on-point decision from the Supreme Court.

But this is important. That does not mean this is a 50/50 legal issue. The vast authority, the vast legal authority and common sense tell us that, of course, we can try a former official.

We've done it before. In 1867, we had a secretary of war who resigned. Then he was impeached and then he was tried.

The House managers argue in their brief, there's no such thing as what's called the January exception. Meaning, you can't allow a president in his final days to abuse power to try to overthrow democracy with no consequences.

And by the way, this is why we had the disqualification penalty in the Constitution.

So I think what this constitutional argument really is, Ana, is a convenient off-ramp for Senators who do not want to embrace what Donald Trump did but also lack the political courage to vote guilty.

CABRERA: I love this next question from the viewer: What are the strategic risks and benefits if Donald Trump argues in the Senate that the election actually was stolen from him?

HONIG: So it's one of many great questions we got this week.

Usually when you're looking at a strategic issue like this, the pros and cons, this to me is all risk, zero benefit for Donald Trump.

When we got Donald Trump's trial brief last week, I was shocked at his attorneys raising this issue. They said Donald Trump, quote, "denies that they" -- meaning these election fraud claims -- "denies they were false."

The Senators can and should call out this defense explicitly. Make Donald Trump's lawyers own it either way.

They should ask Donald Trump's lawyers: Are you saying the 2020 election was stolen? If the answer is, no, good, we can end this lie.

If it's yes, OK, that could force even Republican Senators to vote to convict because the lie is so outrageous and because Donald Trump is so unrepentant.

This is really a self-defeating argument. I think it was a big mistake by Trump's attorneys to include it in the brief. And it would be an even bigger mistake if they raise it in the Senate.

CABRERA: And finally: How much power does the presiding officer have in the impeachment trial?

HONIG: Not much, Ana. If a disputed issue over a subpoena, for example, comes to Senator Leahy, he can decide himself or kick it to the full Senate. But if he decides himself, the Senate can overrule him.

Ultimately, Ana, this is the Senate's show. What they say, goes. It's going to be quite a show. It's going to be fascinating. I'm really looking forward to seeing it this week.

CABRERA: So am I.

Thank you so much as always, Elie.

And reminder. You can send in your questions every week at CNN.com/opinion and look for Elie's "CROSS EXAM" column there.

It is countdown to Super Bowl LV.

CNN's Coy Wire is in Tampa to give us a preview.

Hey, Coy.

COY WIRE, CNN SPORTS ANCHOR: Hi, Ana. How are you? Good to see you.

It was deemed a super spreader sport by many. But here we are, didn't think it would get this far. Big story lines coming up for you just after the break.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

[15:52:49]

CABRERA: Countdown is on to Super Bowl Sunday, pitting the Buccaneers against the Kansas City Chiefs.

But we're now learning one of the assistant coaches for the Chiefs will not be at tomorrow's game.

I want to bring in CNN sports anchor, Coy Wire, in Tampa, Florida, where the game will be played.

Coy, the Chiefs assistant coach, Britt Reid, will miss tomorrow's game. He was in a serious car accident. What are you learning?

WIRE: Ana, police in Kansas City say the linebacker's coach, Britt Reid, son of Chiefs head coach, Andy Reid, was involved in a multi- vehicle crash near Arrowhead Stadium on Thursday night that sent two children to the hospital.

In a search warrant obtain by CNN affiliate, KSHB, a responding officer noted that Reid smelled of alcohol and that Reid said he had consumed two or three drinks before driving.

Police sought and received the judge's permission to collect blood from Reid to assist with their investigation. Reid has not been charged with any crime at this time.

A four-year-old and a five-year-old were hurt. Police described the 5- year-old's injuries as life-threatening. The condition of the children at this time is unknown.

In a statement, the Chiefs said the team is aware of the situation and said their thoughts and prayers are with everyone involved.

The Chiefs also announcing Britt Reid will not be attending the Super Bowl.

This is a big game here, just now 24 hours away. Featuring perhaps, Ana, the greatest quarterback match-up in Super Bowl history. The greatest of all time. Tampa's 43-year-old Tom Brady taking on one of the most exciting players the world has ever seen and Chiefs' 25-year- old Patrick Mahomes.

The players in this game themselves are excited for this one. Listen.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ROB GRONKOWSKI, TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS TIGHT END: We got two unbelievable greatest of all time quarterbacks and a quarterback that is just so young and just doing things that have never been seen before. That's just what's making this Super Bowl so special.

CHRIS GODWIN, TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS WIDE RECEIVER: Tom is a goat. But I think it's clear that Patrick will be one of if not the leader of the new generation of quarterbacks. (END VIDEO CLIP)

WIRE: This is the culmination of the most unusual NFL season, right, Ana? Just 25,000 fans will be in Raymond James behind me.

[15:55:00]

But an NFL exec told me that for fans watching at home, it might not appear empty. That 30,000 cutout cardboard fans will be attending, too.

But among the real fans, about a third of them vaccinated health care workers who were invited here by the league to salute and honor the real heroes

throughout this pandemic.

CABRERA: I'm a big fan of football and a fan of the Super Bowl. I'm having a hard time deciding which team to vote for, to root for, I should say, given I'm a diehard Broncos fan and they each pose a bit of the rivalry within.

WIRE: Maybe next year, your Broncos and my Falcons will be here battling it out.

CABRERA: Keeping those fingers crossed.

Coy Wire, thank you.

In just three days, now former President Donald Trump will face his second impeachment trial before the Senate. Will he show up and testify? His former communications director, Anthony Scaramucci, joins us to discuss, next.

Stay with us. You're live in the CNN NEWSROOM.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)